NEWS RELEASE

Northland Radio Station Receives Arts and Culture Grant

THIEF RIVER FALLS, MN. (March 2, 2010) - Pioneer 90.1 has received a Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Programming grant totaling $238,500 through June 2011. The station will use the grant to produce programming based on local musicians, film makers, authors, and historians.

Part of the grant will be used to present free concerts featuring Minnesota musicians. The shows will be recorded, mixed with interviews with the performers and made available to other independent public radio stations in the state.

The first concert in the performance series will feature Thief River Falls-based blues performers Little Bobby and the Storm, Saturday, March 6th, 7:00 p.m., at the Northland College Theater in Thief River Falls.

Also being developed is a new program called “ArtsFocus,” made up of interviews and radio documentaries about area arts and cultural topics. The first show features an interview with the director of the Ronald Reagan Minuteman Missile State Historic Site in Cooperstown, ND. Area film makers are invited to submit scripts and will be given access to shoot at the site.

The grant allows Pioneer 90.1 to make its programming available on platforms beyond the station’s coverage area. Pioneer 90.1 and the other 11 stations in the AMPERS (Association of Minnesota Public and Educational Radio Stations) network are using the Public Radio Exchange website (www.prx.org) to share and archive original programming. The stations are also making programming available on their websites.

AMPERS is made up of volunteer-driven stations like KAXE in Grand Rapids and WTIP in Grand Marais, along with stations belonging to educational institutions like KUOM at the University of Minnesota, KVSC in St Cloud, and KBEM, which belongs to the Minneapolis Public Schools. “The diverse programs these stations produce deserve to be heard by a larger audience than the stations’ coverage areas allow,” Pioneer 90.1 Station Manager Mark Johnson said. “This grant gives all of us the chance to contribute meaningful programming statewide and beyond.”

Johnson plans to compile highlights from other AMPERS stations’ programming into a weekly show called “Network M-N,” which will be heard on Pioneer 90.1 Fridays at 6pm.

Johnson continued, “The variety and quality of the pieces produced by AMPERS stations compares very well with what you hear on Minnesota Public Radio, which is a much larger organization. Whether it’s a short news piece on skijoring produced by KUOM, or a half-hour radio documentary on the Ojibwa Trading Post Museum on Mille Lacs Lake produced by KVSC, this is programming that brings our state’s arts and cultural heritage alive. We want to add the voices of Northwest Minnesota artists and historians to the mix.” The station is seeking local program producers to create additional original arts and cultural programming.

Pioneer 90.1, which went on the air in 1972, is the only radio station licensed to a Minnesota two-year college. Johnson believes that distinction will attract students from outside the area to attend the Radio Business program, which launches in August as part of Northland’s Center for New Media. The station’s new digital multicast signal will be on the air as soon as mid-March.
Northland Community and Technical College is a comprehensive college with campuses in East Grand Forks, Minn., and Thief River Falls, Minn. One- and two-year degrees, transfer programs and diploma certification are available in a variety of majors, as well as workforce training and continuing education programs. NCTC is a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, and accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association. Visit the College at www.northlandcollege.edu. NCTC is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

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